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PATENT

Appl. No. 10/684,686
Amdt. dated September 8, 2006
Amendment under 37 CFR 1.116 Expedited Procedure
Examining Group 2617

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action mailed July 17, 2006. Claims 1-6, 10-13, 15, 16, 18-24, 26, and 28-36 were pending in the present application. Claims 1-6, 10-13, 15, 16, 18-20, and 30-34 are allowed. This Amendment amends claims 22, 23, 24, 28, 29, 35, and 36, and cancels claims 21 and 26, leaving pending in the application claims 1-6, 10-13, 15, 16, 18-20, 22-24, and 28-36. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

I. Allowed Claims

Claims 1-6, 10-13, 15, 16, 18-20, and 30-34 are allowed.

II. Allowable Claims

Claims 22, 35, and 36 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 22 and 36 have been rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, such that these claims are now in condition for allowance. Claim 35 depends from claim 22, such that this claim also is in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the objections to claims 22, 35, and 36 be withdrawn.

III. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 21, 23-24, 26, and 28-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over *Fortman* (US 6,594,349) in view of *Tunnicliffe* (US 6,055,240) and *Steinberg* (US 6,618,763). As discussed above, claims 22 and 36 are in condition for allowance, and claims 21 and 26 are canceled. Although Applicants do not necessarily agree with the rejections, claims 23-24 and 28-29, which previously depended from claims 21 or 26, as amended now depend from allowable independent claims 22 or 36, which incorporate the limitations of claims 21 or 36, such that these claims also are in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the rejection with respect to claims 21, 23-24, 26, and 28-29 be withdrawn.

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IV. Amendment to the Claims

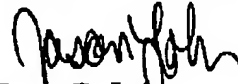
Unless otherwise specified, amendments to the claims are made for purposes of clarity, and are not intended to alter the scope of the claims or limit any equivalents thereof. The amendments are supported by the specification and do not add new matter.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance and an action to that end is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 415-576-0200.

Respectfully submitted,



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